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THE LIFE  
BEYOND

GEORGE H. HEPWORTH







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# THE LIFE BEYOND





THE LIFE BEYOND.

THIS MORTAL MUST  
PUT ON IMMORTALITY.

BY

GEORGE H. HEPWORTH.

AUTHOR OF "HIRAM GOLF'S RELIGION," "THEY MET IN HEAVEN," ETC.

NEW YORK  
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*IT has given me a great deal of pleasure to write this little book. The experiences of a long ministry have been recalled, and I have lived my life all over again.*

*I am specially gratified, however, by the conviction that I have not made a single statement which in any true sense can be called original. As an author, that fact, perhaps, cannot be regarded as a source of pride; but as a lover of my kind it gives me unspeakable joy.*

*Every question which is asked has been put to some Master a thousand times in the generations gone by. The doubts expressed have been the sad inheritance of every age since man first began to wonder and to think. The answers, also, which fall from my Master's lips, have been the gift of faith to a struggling world ever since the morning stars sang together.*

*It is simply my privilege to tell the old story in my own way; and if it be true that no word of comfort is ever uttered in vain, I may be permitted to hope that even these pages will carry good cheer to some forlorn or wearied soul that gropes in the darkness and longs for the light.*

G. H.

✓ Is the lost friend still mysteriously here, even as we are here mysteriously, with God? Know of a truth that only the Time-shadows have perished, or are perishable; that the real Being of whatever was, and whatever is, and whatever will be, is even now and forever. This, should it unhappily seem new, thou mayest ponder ✓ at thy leisure, — for the next twenty years, or the next twenty centuries. Believe it thou must; understand it thou canst not. — CARLYLE.

# THE LIFE BEYOND.

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## CHAPTER I.

### A HANDFUL OF SAND.

I HAVE always called him "The Master." This title seemed to be his by right of mental and moral superiority. He has been my most intimate and my most revered friend from childhood, — the soul of my soul, from whom I should regard it a sacrilege to hide either my hopes or my fears. A man formed "in the prodigality of nature," he would, I am sure; advise me for my best good even at great cost to himself. I have never had cause to doubt either his wisdom or his unselfishness.

It may be a little difficult to fix the fine lineaments of his face in your mind's

eye; but I wish you might see him as I do, and love and trust him as I have done through many dark and joyful experiences. He is somewhat above the medium height, and spare in person. There is a slight stoop to his shoulders, caused perhaps by the fact that he has borne many burdens besides his own. His eyes are deeply blue, like the sky of a clear winter's day, and their gaze is as calm as the sea in summer. You are always conscious, however, such is their searching power, that they not only look at you, but into and through you; not with the glance of curiosity, for no intrusive question has ever passed his lips, but with an evident desire to discover what is good, and to add a blessing to every fresh and beautiful impulse.

He is so gentle that the most timid child finds a restful asylum in his arms; and yet behind the gentleness there is a rugged strength that never deigns to make a compromise with untruth or wrong. I



have seen him indignant on rare occasions ; but his wrath is that of the Lamb. When he utters burning words, they are fringed with pity, and remind one of the silver lining on the edge of a dark cloud.

Had I been a Greek of the olden days and met him, I should have instinctively fallen on my knees, assured that he had strayed from Olympus. His voice, so rich and mellow ; his bearing, so dignified and yet so attractive ; his lack of selfishness, evident in every criticism and gesture, — marked him as an exceptional being ; not supernatural of course, but extra-natural ; not hopelessly beyond imitation, but far above the actual, as one who could talk with an angel on terms of equality.

Through all the earliest years of my life when I dreamed dreams, and now in my middle age, when so many of those dreams are breaking their promise, he has been so wise and tender that I have come to regard him as my second Providence. He has sight and insight ; not only sees

what I wish him to see, but detects the omission if I fail to tell him all, as quickly as a musician discovers the loss of a passage when listening to a symphony of Beethoven. Early in my acquaintance with him I learned, and with a heartache, that he must know everything or nothing. He was impatient of half truths and half statements, or of any attempt to escape censure by an understatement or an overstatement of facts, and would not be content until I had told the exact truth and assumed my full share of blame in any quarrel. In other words, he first discovered me, and then revealed me to myself.

One day my Master and I were standing on the seashore. The boiling surf rumbled at our feet, and the south wind fanned our cheeks as the sun settled behind gorgeous clouds. Neither of us had spoken for several minutes; the scene afforded all the companionship we needed. The proud Atlantic, restlessly rolling toward the sand on the flood-tide, or

restlessly withdrawing on the ebb, one vast expanse of water far as eye could reach; the little fishing-vessels, like silhouettes against the sky, spreading their white sails that they might reach a lea before night fell; the great steamships, leaving long tracts of black smoke behind, just crossing the threshold of the harbor and bearing their freight of life and treasure to some farther shore; behind us the drowsy villagers, their day's work done, preparing for well-earned slumber; on the horizon's edge a range of hills crimsoned by the last rays of a declining day, — all this gave to meditation a strange and serene satisfaction.

Then I grasped a handful of sand, and watched it as it slipped through my fingers. I sighed as I said, "Master, I cannot hold it."

"It is the symbol of time," he answered. "It is yours for a moment only. Do your best, it escapes. The man is stronger than the child, but neither man nor child

can hold it fast. Particle by particle it falls to the beach whence it came."

"And that is very sad," I stoutly asserted.

"Why so, my son?"

"Because life is beautiful, and I would keep it as long as I may."

"You mistake," he said. "Life is not beautiful, but the soul is beautiful. Time has little to do with happiness, or with achievement. The present is simply eternity in swaddling clothes. Why grow sad at the loss of these little days, when there are so many ones before you? What difference does it make to the spirit of man whether it is Here or There? Let the sand slip through your fingers; let the days come and go. These are matters of small consequence. You are rich in having the whole beach to draw from, though you require only a handful; and doubly rich in having the ages credited to your account, though you can use only a few days at a time."

“But life is so short, Master,” I persisted. “I have a thousand plans, a thousand alluring hopes. The years in which to achieve are so few that I am discouraged. I no sooner get ready than evening comes and the darkness shuts down.”

“Every day, every experience,” replied the Master, solemnly, “is man’s opportunity. If you have courage, all goes well; if you are a coward, all goes ill. Think of these lines, for they hide a great truth:” —

“A craven hung along the battle’s edge  
And thought, ‘Had I a sword of keener steel, —  
That true blade that the King’s son bears. But this  
Blunt thing!’ — he snapped and flung it from his hand.

“Then came the King’s son, wounded, sore bestead,  
And weaponless, and saw the broken sword  
Hilt-buried in the dry and trodden sand,  
And ran and snatched it; and with battle-shout  
Lifted afresh, he hewed his enemy down,  
And saved a great cause that heroic day.”

“You shame me, Master,” I cried in mingled pain and pride, “with your cutting words. And yet, though I have been

eager, my life is slipping away and little has been accomplished. Only yesterday I was young; to-day I am in middle life; to-morrow I shall be old; the next day —”

“Well,” he interrupted, “and the next day?”

“Why, the next day I shall be in my grave,” I answered firmly.

“I am sorry, very sorry,” and the Master gazed thoughtfully at the shadows which gathered over the water.

“But is it not true?” I asked.

“I hope not. I do indeed hope not. I cannot think of you, my dear friend, in a grave.”

“I do not mean quite that, perhaps,” I replied. “Not I, but my body, — this house in which I live.”

“And you yourself?” he asked, with a warm glow in his tones.

“Ah, well, as for what you call myself,” — and I dropped the handful of sand, — “I shall be in the Beyond, possibly.”

“Possibly, my son! Can you say no

more than that? Is immortality only a possibility? Then I do not wonder that you cling to these fleeting days and years, and lose them with regret. You doubt, therefore you fear. The certainty of another life is happiness; its uncertainty is despair. If the craft in which you set sail is not seaworthy, your voyage is but prolonged misery. If you suspect the skill of your captain, you are in dread every hour; but if the captain has weathered a hundred storms, and your craft is stanch, you laugh at the tempest, and the billows are mere playthings. To know that life is only the beginning, is to journey with a high heart; to fear that it may be the end, is to shiver and shrink as the years toll themselves into the past."

"And you have no doubts?" I asked.

"When I stand in the porch of the cathedral," he answered impressively, "I scan its beauties, and am glad and happy, but my chief enjoyment is one of anticipation. The architect who designed and

builded such a porch has by those acts promised me an entrance into the larger building. The porch is but the preface to the story which he will tell me later on; no man builds a porch and then forgets to build the cathedral of which it is the threshold. I may linger as I gaze at the fine symbols which he has cut into marble, and marvel at his skill; but after all I am not sorry when that lesser delight is ended, and the great baize curtains are drawn aside, and I am ushered into the main structure, whose nave stretches into the distance, whose dome, with its many colored lights, hovers over my startled littleness, and whose organ-peals send a thrill of new-born happiness through my soul. Is it not so with you also, my son?"

"Not quite, dear Master," I replied; "I wish it were. I do not know that I have any positive apprehensions of the future, but when I think of it there is twilight in my heart. I am sure of to-day, can see it, feel it; I wish it would stay with me



forever. Sometimes when I sit alone in my room and hear that old Dutch clock tick the seconds away, I grow wild and desperate. My powerlessness irritates me, and when the dull, resounding gong strikes the hour, I feel like doing battle with Time, binding him hand and foot, and so prevent this awful robbery of precious moments."

"Then you are not happy?" he asked.

"No, except when I am too occupied to think of these things."

"If you were sure —"

"Then I should sound this life to its depths, use every opportunity to the best of my ability, and with my half-finished plans and half-dreamed dreams, face the future with a hopefulness and a joy beyond expression."

"Yes, yes," he mused; "and you, my son, represent the average man?"

"I fear so, Master."

"The future is to many men a mere Perhaps."

"I dare not say it is anything more. And to you?"

"To me? I sometimes think that if I could be as sure of this life as I am of the other, I should be happier."

I looked my wonder, but did not utter it.

"We must speak of this again," he said, at length.

Then, without a word, we retraced our steps to the little cottage.

"Good-night, my son," he said, as he took my hand. "We will now lie down in death for a few hours, and in the morning the sun will wake us. Sleep? Is it not death? And is it not a refreshment? Good-night."

## CHAPTER II.

### FURNACE AND TRIP-HAMMER.

A LITTLE later on my Master and I were sitting together before a bright fire. The darkness had crept upon us with slippered feet, but we did not care to call for lights. When one is in a thoughtful mood, the gloaming is an incentive; our minds run smoothly when the twilight begins to deepen. There is something also very friendly, something that induces serious conversation in an open-grate fire. The imagination is stirred, and we easily become confidential. When we talk to each other in the broad light of day, we instinctively restrain a free utterance, because it seems as though all the world were listening; but when the room is in

shadow, and the chairs look like spectres, and the pale and fitful light from the bits of coal is thrown on our faces, we feel quite alone, and willingly tell our secrets.

"Master," I said, hardly knowing how to begin, "we all endure sorrow. That seems a strange, and at times a cruel, necessity; and our disappointments and griefs fall upon us by the multitude with crushing force."

We were looking pensively into the fire, and as I broke one of the coals the flame threw its light on his beautiful face.

"Yes, thank Heaven," he answered; "it is one of the wise decrees of Providence that hearts should ache."

Then we were silent for a full minute. What could the Master mean, I asked myself. I could not quite transfer my thoughts to his standpoint, and was puzzled.

"It would seem," I said, at length, "as though our Father would like His children to be happy."

"So He does," was the reply; "and for that reason He has sent afflictions into the world."

"A paradox," I ventured to suggest.

"The strongest foundation," the Master went on, — "the strongest and surest foundation for happiness is sorrow. Tears make our eyes telescopic. Dry eyes see the earth; wet eyes see the heavens. Tears are like a shower to the parched soil; they fructify the soul and make it rich in fruit. Without them life would be one long drought, and in the autumn our granaries would be empty."

"You preach a strange doctrine, Master."

"The man," he continued, not noticing my interruption, — "the man whose eyes have never been dimmed by disappointment has lost something of incalculable value. Disappointment and grief are golden keys which open secret chambers where untold treasure is hidden."

"But, Master, graveyards are many."

“True, but graveyards are God's best evangelists. They preach with a solemn eloquence which must be heeded; they teach the great lesson at a time when ears are open to hear. There is no sadness in a freshly opened tomb, if you remember one fact.”

“Master, go on; I would learn that fact.”

“No sadness, if you remember that there are two doors to every tomb.”

“Two doors? Is not one enough?”

“No, my son. One door means death and separation; two mean life and reunion. There is a door on this side, which swings on rusty hinges; there is also one on the other side, and it swings on golden hinges. With these eyes we see the first; with the eyes of faith we see the second. This one closes, and we go back to our homes sorrowful; the other one opens, and the released soul enters the glorious presence of God.”

“Then you think,” I said, —

“That Heaven but tries our virtue by affliction ;  
That oft the cloud which wraps the present hour  
Serves but to brighten all our future days ?”

“I am sure,” was the answer, “that the world would be intolerable without its sorrows ; it would be impossible to live in it. A man without a grief is a man without a heart ; no soul ripens except in the dark. Give men all they want, and you give them too much ; God’s withholding is man’s salvation.”

“But could not a world be made in which grief would be unnecessary ?”

“The Lord must answer that, my son, not I. I only know that as human nature is constituted, there must be night as well as day, storms as well as sunshine. There are certain qualities of character which would lie dormant but for sorrow ; and they are the best qualities, — those we admire most and most covet.

“The farmer’s crops come from the sweat of his brow. He tears the quiescent sod with the relentless cruelty of the

plough; he exercises a wise providence over his acres, knows what is best for them, and in spite of their resistance runs the furrow to the end of the field. The worthless grass may cry out that it is content as it is; but the farmer knows that the soil is capable of bearing something of greater value. He insists, and seems a tyrant, when in truth he is beneficent. The rude harrow completes the work of seeming destruction, and then the seed is scattered broadcast. The sun smiles on what has been done; the dews distil their richness; the winds make music in the forests; the rains pour themselves in a flood. Then comes the glorious autumn. That field laughs with yellow sheaves of grain; it has accomplished a useful purpose. The grain at the end is the result of the plough at the beginning.

“The soul is the field; affliction is the plough. No farm without a plough; no heart without a grief.”

I could say nothing. My Master's fin-



gers were sweeping the strings of a harp whose mellow music was like a prayer. The fire in the grate began to sing, as cannel-coal sometimes does, and it seemed an approving response to what the Master said:

“We are made of obdurate metal,” he continued, as his voice sank almost to a whisper, “and Heaven must needs smite us with terrible force. I saw a huge pile of rough, crude iron-ore just taken from the bowels of a mountain; it was useless, but full of possibilities. They threw it into a furnace seven times heated. When it came out like a mill-stream, it had been born again. The old worthless elements had been consumed, and it was a new creature. That furnace was apparently a great sorrow; the flames were cruel, and the heat was not to be endured.

“But the period of tribulation was not yet ended. A little later on the bars into which it had been cast were heated to a white heat and placed under a trip-ham-

mer. The sparks flew as the blows fell; every flying spark was a remonstrance. But the designer who needed that iron for a special purpose shaped it to a plan of his own. It was no easy task; but the trip-hammer fell with redoubled energy, and at last the metal yielded. It took the shape required; and if it had had consciousness, it would have been grateful for both hammer and furnace.

"The soul must also go through the furnace and into the forge and under the trip-hammer; it takes shape slowly, and then only by blows. God's hammer is God's love. He wishes us to be all we can be; and affliction is the only means by which the end can be accomplished."

"But, Master, what is needed to enable men to find in sorrow what God has placed there?"

"A better understanding of the divine law," he replied. "God's relations to the human soul depend entirely on that soul's attitude. God is always willing to be on

confidential terms with us; but we are sometimes obstinate and blind. He tells us what to do — ”

“ But gives no reasons why we must do it,” I suggested.

“ True,” he answered very gravely. “ Do you know why He should, my son? The giant and the pygmy travel side by side a dangerous road. The giant simply says to the pygmy: ‘ The way is dark and beset by robbers. If you go alone, you are likely to fall and be destroyed. Put your hand in mine; we will go together, and you will be safe. Obey without question, and you shall soon see the gray dawn on the hilltops, and the day will brighten.’ Why should the giant explain to the pygmy at such a time? The only duty of that undefended traveller is to listen to the voice of his friend, and to heed his words.”

“ But, Master, it is hard to do that. The road is sometimes dreary; the weak soul becomes embarrassed; and when the storm gathers — ”

“When the storm gathers, my son, all the more need to trust One wiser than ourselves. Our bewilderment is dissipated by faith in the Great One ; we can be calm if He promises to see us safely to the journey’s end. What is danger to us is nothing to Him. He has travelled that self-same path before ; but we travel it for the first time. He knows the whole ; we know nothing. Our sole responsibility is quiet, un murmuring obedience ; we must not wait to discuss, nor yet to be convinced that He can keep His word. The safety we have already enjoyed is the only proof of His power which He vouchsafes to grant. Is not that enough?”

He saw that my mind was still troubled and went on.

“A child is afraid to cross the narrow bridge that spans the river. The roaring of the waters, the sougling of the wind, the feeling of uncertainty that creeps over him, make him tremble. He hears the voice of the father on the other bank. If

he says to his soul, 'That is my father; he is able to save me; he has crossed this bridge, and knows every point of danger; I cannot fail, I cannot fall while he guides me' — if he says that, timidity becomes courage. The troubled mind is no longer troubled. Each step is firm. He simply listens and obeys. 'To the right, my child, that plank is weak.' 'To the left, my child, that plank is strong,' — these are words of wisdom and comfort. He yields his own judgment to the keeping of that loving parent, draws on the higher wisdom and trusts nothing to his own ignorance. Then step by step he reaches the end and falls into the father's arms."

"I would I had such faith as that, dear Master."

"The child has it, my son, why not the man?"

"We want to know more, to see more," I replied. "We ought perhaps to surrender to this infinite wisdom; but it is difficult."

"Yes," and the Master grew sad, — "yes,

we are full of conceit. When God's way is our way, we are satisfied. When He asks us to walk by faith rather than sight, we demur. But what a world this would be, my son, if we trusted the Lord completely! How easily we should bear our burdens! How hopefully we should meet the sorrows of life! As the bee findeth honey in the weed, so we should find joy in bereavement. Then our griefs would be our opportunities. But we are self-willed; not we, but God must bend. The father must beg the child to trust him. So the world weeps blindly, and without consolation. All is within reach; but we possess nothing. The spirit starves; but the larder is full. It shivers with the cold when it need but move into the sunshine to be warm."

Then he repeated these lines which have echoed in my heart ever since: —

"Keep thine arms round all, O Father,  
Round lamenting and lamented;  
Round the living and repenting,  
Round the dead who have repented.

“Keep thine arms round all, O Father,  
That are left or that are taken;  
For they all are needy, whether  
The forsaking or forsaken.”

The Master rose. He was worn with the day's work and needed rest. “Give me but faith,” he said, “and you may have all else. Without that, life is but lingering agony. With that, the world is a glad place to live in, even at midnight. Take from me my house, my home, my friends, my dear ones, if you will, but leave me that one jewel of great price, and I can rejoice, or at least I can endure. But give me all that men most covet,—fame, riches, honors,—and deprive me of my implicit confidence in God's love, and I am a useless clod; my heart is broken, my enthusiasm is gone, my hope withers. Faith is the lamp that guides my feet in slippery places and closes my eyes in refreshing slumber.”

He was gone. I sat there for hours alone; every now and again stirring the

coals to an unusual blaze and wondering if I could ever climb the heights on which the Master stood, and see the horizon lighted by the rising sun of an eternal morning as he saw it.



## CHAPTER III.

### PULLEYS AND WIRES.

ONE afternoon a messenger brought me a note from the Master. I was busy, but his wish was always my law. Of course he knew that I had little time to spare, because it was my only capital in trade; if, therefore, he requested me to give him any portion of it, it was because he felt that the expenditure would result to my benefit.

The note ran: —

“Come to me at your convenience. This afternoon if possible. Bring your mind and your heart with you.”

In half an hour I had his hand in mine. Evidently he was in an unusually serious mood, not sad, but pensively thoughtful.

“My son,” he began, “you are quite aware that I seldom deal in argument. I regard it as the poorest weapon in the religious arsenal. As a general rule men are not converted by discussion, but by the recognition of facts. True religion does not rest on logic, but on results produced. The atheist may easily win in a controversy if he is the more alert disputant. What he states may seem convincing because his opponent has either used the wrong weapons, or used the right ones unskillfully. An unbeliever may carry off the laurels in a debate with a dull or unlearned Christian, though the everlasting truth may be with the latter. When, however, you place side by side the highest results of infidelity and the best results of religion, logic is silenced. You have before you a question of fact. Admit that better qualities of character are developed by religion than by atheism, a serener kind of endurance under suffering, a larger hopefulness when death knocks at your

door, and you have proved your case. The dictum of science is that the theory which does the best work and produces the best results is more likely to be true than the theory which fails in either of these particulars. I care very little for mere argumentation, therefore, and spend my strength in watching the effect of Christianity on human hearts. On the whole, I am sure that the heart is worth more than the brain. But I have sent for you this afternoon because — ”

“ You would break your rule, Master, and engage me in controversy ? ” I suggested.

“ No,” he answered ; “ but because I wish to afford you an unusual opportunity to reason with yourself. In a word,” he added, with half a smile on his lips, “ I want to see you play a game of chess.”

I was surprised, startled, and to a certain extent pained. He at once detected all these states of mind and gently replied :

“ I was never more in earnest in my life.

I know nothing more important than the lesson which I hope you will teach your soul during that game."

Of course I tried to stammer something in reply, but my embarrassment got the better of me. I was completely undone, and half inclined to think that the Master had begun to pay the penalty of overwork.

"I see your embarrassment," he said, "and will explain. Some months ago it was my good fortune to receive a sum of money. I need so little myself, my wants being few, that I looked about to find some worthy object on which to bestow it. Poor old Simeon Teets had been stricken with typhoid fever which carried him within hearing distance of heaven. But careful nursing and our friend Doctor Brink brought him back to health. He was almost sorry to return, however, for he had lost his situation and was hopelessly dependent. One of his neighbors had a pecuniary interest in an automaton chess-player, and he offered, for a specified sum

to take Simeon into the firm. I gave him the money, and he tells me that he has been reasonably successful. The automaton is on exhibition a few blocks away, and as you are an expert at the game I thought you might explain certain things which have seemed to me very mysterious. Will you go?"

I confess, I had not yet recovered from my astonishment, but I assented with such cheerfulness as I could command. I thought of Dean Swift's pathetic prediction: "I shall be like that tree, — I shall die at the top." We are apt to forget that in the hands of a wise man the slightest incident may become a matter of great moment. The dear Lord illustrated some of His divine teachings by the birds of the air, the fall of a sparrow, the tares of the field, and the homely occurrences of every day life. The Master, as I very soon learned, had in mind one of the most solemn problems man has ever tried to solve. It was not an hour of leisurely

pleasure to which he was leading me ; but a matter that underlies our life as a corner-stone underlies the temple which it upholds.

We reached the little hall in which the exhibition was held, and, fortunately for us, there were few visitors. Simeon greeted the Master with something like reverence, and me with simple courtesy. He had evidently expected our visit, and was prepared to puzzle me as much as possible.

“ We will examine the automaton, if you please,” said the Master.

Thereupon Simeon opened a door in the wooden image and asked me to make myself acquainted with whatever was hidden therein. I saw a curious and interesting complication of wires and pulleys. What real relation they had to the several movements of head, eyes, and arms was beyond my ken. He opened another and still another door, through each of which I thrust my hand, but could dis-

cover nothing except more pulleys and wires. It was a very curious and perfect bit of mechanism.

"You have seen through these several doors the whole inside?" asked Simeon.

"It would seem so," I answered doubtfully.

"You discover no place in which a man or even a boy could hide himself?" asked the Master.

"No," I replied; "there is apparently no room for anything more than what I have seen."

"Then, if you are quite satisfied on that point," said Simeon, "perhaps you will take a seat at the front of the automaton and play a game with him."

I took the chair indicated and advanced the king's pawn. After a brief interval the wooden hand rose, and the stiff fingers answered my move. The game went on briskly for some time; but I soon discovered that I was playing with no novice. The least slip on my part was taken advan-

tage of. I was forced to summon all my resources; and even then it was, for thirty minutes, uncertain which contestant would make the checkmate. The automaton forced me to place my king in an exposed position, and then with such alertness drove me to its defence that I was in constant danger. I applied myself to the task with increasing and almost tremulous energy; but my opponent pressed me at every point. An indiscreet move on my part laid bare my queen's rook, after which followed a check and the rook's capture. I then fought a losing game, and was positively relieved when, by a sudden exchange of pieces, the automaton threw his knight into a strong position, and with his king's bishop effected a checkmate. I had played my best, but lost the game. The automaton was more expert than I, and my pride was humbled.

All this time the Master stood by my side carefully watching the varying vicissi-



tudes of the play. That angular, wooden arm of the automaton, awkward to the last degree, always lifted the right piece, always laid it down in the right place, and never made a mistake.

"A very interesting contest between a man and a machine," the Master said slowly and gravely.

I had no reply to make, but smiled my incredulity, and shrugged my shoulders.

"It seems," he added, "that a brain is not the only vehicle of intelligence. The cunning artisan can make a substitute which does just as good work, and in this case better."

"Master," I replied, "I have not been playing chess with that wooden image."

"No?" he asked inquiringly.

"Certainly not," I answered; "there is a brain like mine hidden somewhere in that automaton. Wires and pulleys are not able to checkmate me."

"But, my son, you examined the automaton. You opened every door, did you

not, and declared at last that neither boy nor man could be concealed on the inside. Your investigation was as complete as you could make it; and you have the evidence of your senses that there was and could be nothing but wires and pulleys."

"Still," I replied rather warmly, "I am willing to accuse myself of having been entirely duped by my senses. The examination appeared to be exhaustive; but in reality it was not so."

"Why do you come to that conclusion, my son?"

"Because I am convinced beyond the possibility of a doubt that no machinery, however skilfully devised, can adapt itself to the uncertainty of my moves. If it were known beforehand that I should move a given number of pawns and pieces in a prescribed way, it might then be possible to mechanically prepare for each move. But the automaton had no means of knowing whether my next move would be with knight or bishop; and yet, in every

instance, he met my attack and repelled me. Therefore — ”

“ Yes,” broke in the Master; “ I am interested to know what conclusion you reach.”

“ Therefore,” I went on, “ there must be a man with a brain hidden inside that wooden man, whether I am able to discover his whereabouts or not.”

“ You seem to be very positive on that point,” said the Master.

“ I am more than positive; I am absolutely certain,” I replied. “ I think I would stake my life on the truth of that statement.”

“ And yet you have not seen him,” mused the Master.

“ No; but I have played chess with him, nevertheless.”

“ And you sought for him,” he continued, “ and could not find him. It would therefore appear reasonable, would it not, to suppose, that there is no man of flesh inside the man of wood, but that

what was done was done by machinery alone?"

I shook my head. "It is not possible to convince me of that."

"Then you will admit, my son," he added with great seriousness, "that there may be a man within a man; and so carefully hidden that with your utmost research you cannot say, 'He is here,' or 'He is there'?"

"I not only admit it," I answered, "but I assert it, and challenge contradiction."

"I think you have reasoned well," said the Master. "We shall soon see."

Simeon, who had been listening in an amused way to this dialogue, led us once more to the rear of the figure. He opened the doors through which we had before, peered; but nothing was visible. Then he touched a secret spring, and another door flew open. To my astonishment I saw a man crouched in what must have been a very uncomfortable position. Where he found sufficient room for his body, arms,

and legs is still a mystery to me. But there he was, nevertheless; and it was he and not the man of wood with whom I had played the game.

At a word, and with a series of contortions, he managed to crawl out of his hiding place, and seemed greatly relieved at his freedom.

"I was right, Master," I said triumphantly, — "I was right in boldly asserting that there was a man inside the man, and that it was the inside man who check-mated me."

"Yes," he answered slowly. "Yes; you were quite right. Now let us be going."

When we reached the street, he turned to the north; whereas our homes were to the south.

"Master," I ventured to say, "we have taken the wrong road."

"No," he answered; "this is right. We have still an hour before sundown, and I have something else to show you. You reason so skilfully that I would like to

have you do it once more. We have not far to go; and I think you will be repaid for your pains."

We were, both of us, disinclined to conversation; so I walked at his side, his arm in mine, and said nothing. Silence is sometimes eloquent; and sometimes it is companionable. We do not always need to speak in order to convey our thoughts. I saw what the Master wanted to impress on my mind,—namely, that there is a man within a man, that the two are wholly distinct and independent of each other. He showed his usual tact by making no reference to the subject, but allowing it time to become firmly fixed in my mind.

We turned into the tenement district. Ah, how the Master was loved by those lowly folk! He had a kindly word for every one; though sometimes it was a word of advice or warning. He reminded me of the Christ in the streets of Jerusalem. There was a calm authority in all

he said and did which it would have seemed sacrilege to question. I whispered to my heart: When the Master passes on to his reward, his epitaph should be, "The poor were sorry when he died." The love which those tenement lodgers bore him had something of reverence in it; and the reverence with which they bowed as he passed had much of love in it.

Up three flights we found our way, or rather stumbled; and then he knocked at a door. The woman who opened it was in tears.

"He's going fast," she sobbed. "The doctor has just been here, and he says it's pretty nearly over. Poor Tom! How can I spare him?"

"Mary," said the Master, "if the Lord calls him, you can spare him. Tom is needed in heaven; the Lord has sent for him. Would you keep him, Mary?"

The appeal well-nigh broke the woman's heart. I have never seen greater anguish.

But the Master was as calm as he was gentle.

Then he turned to me. "Did you hear," he asked, "what this poor woman said, my son? Her words were, 'He's going fast!' That is the language of a faithful, trusting soul. It befits the noblest elements of our human nature. He's going! Not simply the life, my son, but he."

Tom heard his step, and possibly his whispered words of comfort to the wife. As we entered the room he beckoned to the Master. His speech was very feeble, for there were only a few sparks of vitality left; but he was cheerful and resigned. After a little that strange pallor came over his face which always means that the Messenger has arrived. Tom took a last long look at the world, then gasped, "Good-by, Molly," and was gone.

We knelt by the bedside, and the Master prayed. I never knew till that moment the real significance of prayer. The Master seemed sure that the Lord would hear



him and grant his requests, provided the higher wisdom deemed it expedient. There was in his petition a certain assurance, like that of a son who feels that he has a right to consult with his father, and at the same time a profound humility which kept self, even with its eagerness for assistance, in the background, and was satisfied to state the matter as the petitioner understood it, and then leave it in the hands of the Being whom he addressed. It was an impressive prayer, but full of unwavering faith, and calm, serene confidence.

Mary left the room for a little; and the Master summoned me to his side by the body of poor Tom.

"My son," he said, "a wonderful change has occurred in the career of this dear sleeper. An hour ago these ears could hear, these eyes could see, these lips could speak. You heard the last words he uttered. If you speak to him now, he will not respond. He hears nothing; he sees

nothing; that hand lies limp on the coverlid. This body is like the wooden image of the automaton; there you had wires and pulleys, — a marvellous arrangement of mechanical skill. Here you have nerves and muscles, — a device so cunning, so artistic, so perfect in every part, that genius may try to duplicate it in vain. You could not find the man within the man when you searched the wooden image; and a similar investigation, while Tom lived, would have had the same result. In both cases the man within the man was so deftly concealed that he was undiscoverable."

I bowed my head in affirmation; but the tears welled into my eyes. I felt the full force of what the Master said, and saw why he had sent me that note. I had passed, or was passing, through the most solemn experience of my life, and the red blood of suppressed excitement tinged my cheeks.

"You argued," he continued, "that

though you could find nobody hidden in the automaton, there must be — that was the phrase you used — there must be some one there. When I asserted that the wires and pulleys were playing chess with you, you repudiated the statement, and became still more emphatic that there was some one in that wooden man who not only checked but checkmated you. Then your statement was proved true. Simeon opened a door which had escaped your notice, and the real chess-player stepped out. He was glad to get away from his narrow quarters, and felt a sense of freedom in the use of his limbs."

Again I nodded.

"The same argument holds good here. Tom was concealed within these confining limits. While thus imprisoned he used all this marvellous machinery. He spoke to you through these lips, looked at you through these eyes, and extended this emaciated hand in welcome."

I was in a whirl of conflicting thoughts.

The scene seemed to suffocate me. I nervously caught my breath, and felt myself trembling from head to foot.

"Some one — we call him Death," went on the Master — "has unbarred that other door. Tom has stepped out; and what you now see is only a wonderful bit of mechanism."

"Enough, my Master, enough," I hoarsely whispered; "I can endure no more. I have learned your lesson."

"Then," he replied, "we will be grateful."

We parted at the street corner. His last words were, "My son, there is always a man within the man; and death is the gentle warden of his prison-house, who, when the order for release comes, takes the key from his girdle, unlocks the door, and sets the prisoner free. Farewell." And he was gone.

## CHAPTER IV.

### AN UNFINISHED BUILDING.

NOVEMBER is a cheerless, dreary month; but when you sit in front of a bright open fire it loses its terrors. I have a certain disdain for what are named modern improvements, — furnace-heated houses, running water in every room, weather strips which hermetically seal the room and make it as unhealthy as possible; so when I inherited a little snugger, I had all these so-called “conveniences” removed, very much to the suppressed disgust of some of my friends, and determined to be comfortable in my own way.

Among other things which I insisted upon was a fireplace of the old-fashioned sort, nearly six feet wide. In the cool autumn days a lump of cannel-coal would

give me all the light and heat I wanted; but when winter set in, — say the last of November, — with its penetrating winds and its flying snow-flakes, I cheered myself with a huge back-log, which would burn and sputter for hours, and an armful of smaller stuff for purposes of illumination.

That was the room in which the Master and I were wont to sit. His conversation flowed like a stream of molten silver, and I was a good listener. He delighted to recite the experiences of the day, and to use them as clews which helped us to grope our way through many dark and troublous problems.

One afternoon — it was Sunday — we walked to church together. On the way we passed a huge building, at the corner of the street, in process of construction. After the manner of the Christ, he found a lesson in it. He stood for some minutes gazing at its comely proportions, and at last said, —

"A noble structure, my son."

"Yes," I answered; "it will be when completed."

"Completed?" he asked. "Is it not already complete?"

"Why, Master," I said, "can you not see that it is quite imperfect? The roof is not yet on; there are no windows; the floors are merely scaffoldings; and here, scattered all about us, are piles of material."

"Yes," he answered musingly; "I have noticed all these things; but, my son, there are no workmen here. One would think the end had been reached, would they not? And yet it seems sad that an edifice with such promise should never be finished."

"Master," I hastened to say, "you are curiously mistaken. I have watched this building from the very beginning; I have seen it grow stone by stone. Moreover, the architect is my personal friend, and he has permitted me to look at the plans.

In its present rude condition it is comparatively unsightly; but when a few more months have passed it will be one of the finest buildings in the city. The laborers are not here, because it is the Sabbath; but to-morrow morning they will be at work again."

He looked at me with a strange gleam in his eyes.

"So you believe the work will go on, my son?"

"Most assuredly, Master."

"And why do you believe it?" he asked.

"For a thousand reasons," I replied.

"Give me one," he said.

"Well, because incomplete buildings are of no use. It would be worse than folly to begin such a work and not finish it."

"Worse than folly?" he repeated. "Is not that strong language?"

"Strong, but not too strong," I replied.

"The supposition that an edifice like that



should be left in its present condition needs rather vehement repudiation."

"You argue, then," he broke in, "from what you know of the nature of the building itself; and you feel a degree of assurance when you state that some time hence it will be more than it is now."

"Of course, Master. What a blunder it would be to dig deep for such foundations as those; to go to an enormous expense to quarry rock and purchase timber, and then leave the structure as it is to-day."

"Give me another reason," he added calmly. "I am greatly interested."

"Why, I know what the building is intended for: it is to be a warehouse for costly importations. It will hold vast values; but as it is now, it is useless for this purpose. With no roof and no windows, the rains would beat in and destroy everything; with no floors, the fabrics would be endangered; and with no doors for protection, thieves could break in and steal."

"Have you still another reason?" he asked.

"Certainly, Master. The architect has a reputation; he has earned it in many ways, by other structures, a score of them, which are used for like purposes. He would be adjudged not simply unwise, but unworthy of his profession, if he should carry a project with such possibilities only thus far and no farther."

"Then from what you know of the builder," he said, "and from what you know of the building itself, — that is, the purposes which it is capable of fulfilling, — you conclude that what you see is not all, but that this incompleteness is to give way to completeness in the future?"

"Precisely, my Master."

"What real strength have your arguments?" he persisted. "Do you simply entertain an opinion, or have you a decided conviction?"

"Why," I answered, "it is a conviction so conclusive that the world would have

to be turned upside down, and all the results of my experience reversed, before I could admit the possibility of a doubt. If I know anything at all; if I can in any degree rely on my observation, — I am as sure as I am that the sun will rise to-morrow."

"You are indeed confident," he answered, and then we walked on.

At last the drift of his questioning became apparent. For fully ten minutes neither of us spoke; we were too much absorbed in our own thoughts for conversation. At length, however, I ventured to ask, "Master, why do you believe that the soul is immortal?"

"Because," he answered very deliberately, "its development is incomplete at death, and God never begins a work without finishing it."

"The soul is like that building," I suggested.

"In many respects, yes, my son. I think I know something of the plan of

the Architect. The work He has laid out cannot be done in time, only begun. It must be finished, if finished at all, in eternity."

Then the conversation dropped, because we were at the door of the little chapel. In the evening, however, the subject was resumed; and by that open fire we talked and mused until the warning tones of the old clock in the corner forced us to part. He spoke in staccato phrases; and I noted them down as they fell from his lips: —

"We hardly get ready to live before death knocks at our doors. Our powers gradually mature, as the years with their heat and frost go by; and at the end we are conscious that we can do much more and much better if we have the opportunity. Is it possible that that opportunity will be denied us?

"No man ever accomplished all that could reasonably be required of him. However faithful he may be, he must

needs leave his work unfinished. He is an arrested development when we lower his body into the grave.

“We believe in immortality from instinct. Unbelief, like the taste for certain fruits, is not natural; it repudiates the one thing which we crave with unappeasable appetite.

“You are forced to reason yourself out of a belief in immortality; and when your reason has done its best, and accomplished its task, the hope still lingers that the reasoning is not conclusive. No man ever rejoices that a future life is denied him.

“This faith is the cradle in which all the higher virtues are rocked.

“Give me that one glorious conviction as my soul’s anchor, and I can outride all storms. When doubt becomes my anchor, it drags in the tempest, and my soul goes ashore, a wreck.

“If a man dies when he dies, it were better he had never been born; God made a mistake in creating him.

“The bereavement which looks into the grave is leaden; the bereavement which dares to look toward the stars with hope is golden.

“If the heart says ‘Finis,’ it is wounded beyond all surgery. If it says ‘to be continued,’ it is like a Toledo blade which bends but cannot snap.”

## CHAPTER V.

### "A LITTLE NEARER HOME."

I VERY abruptly opened a conversation with the Master one evening by saying, as I roughly used my iron wand on the logs in the big fire-place and raised a glorious shower of sparks,—

"Master, what is your attitude toward honest doubt?"

"One of admiration for the honesty," he replied, "and of pity for the doubt."

"Why pity?" I inquired.

"Because that condition of mind which calls up from the vasty deep a group of ghostly uncertainties instead of eternal and inspiring verities is depressing and debilitating. Universal doubt would be the equivalent of universal barbarism; universal faith is the equivalent of pro-

gress. The world will not run smoothly on negations. Human nature is so constituted that it must have some strong convictions or it can do no good work."

"I have never seen a man," I continued, "whose faith seemed to be as vivid as yours is. You have positively no fear of death, not even that shrinking from the ordeal which is natural to human nature."

"Why should I shrink?" he asked.

"Because it is a leap into the dark," I suggested.

"On the contrary," he replied quickly, "it is a leap from the dark into the light. If one's income has been limited to copper coins, and he has lived within the narrow environment of such purchases as copper represents, would he shrink from accepting a piece of gold, which will afford him the comforts which he has often dreamed of but never possessed? Does a man shrink when he falls heir to a large estate? This life is well enough. Its stars make the night beautiful; and its waving



fields of grain rejoice the heart. I am grateful for the grandeur and suggestiveness of my surroundings, and must try to get the best there is, and appropriate it to my personal use. Every day brings its separate enjoyment; and it is a great privilege to live in these lower rooms of the Father's mansion. But why should I complain if the Owner of the House sends me word that He has prepared a more commodious apartment, and would be glad to have me move into it. If I have lived rightly, I deem it an honor and a privilege to die.”

“ I think Hamlet represents my feelings and my fears,” I answered, “ in these words: ” —

“ To die : to sleep ;

No more ; and by a sleep to say we end

The heartache and the thousand natural shocks

That flesh is heir to, — 't is a consummation

Devoutly to be wished. To die, to sleep ;

To sleep : perchance to dream : ay, there 's the rub ;

For in that sleep of death what dreams may come

When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,

Must give us pause.”

The Master sat silent for a moment. Then he said, "My son, a certain dread of death is necessary to the preservation of life. If men were otherwise constituted, we should be unwilling to remain in this disappointing world. If the gorgeous battlements of heaven were visible, and we could look from our burdens to its rest and peace, from our tears and struggles to its surpassing joys, self-slaughter would become a universal custom. Why live in a hut, when, by a moment's pain, we could transport ourselves to a palace? The longing for the other life would be so intense that all the higher purposes of this life would be frustrated."

"I see," I said, "and if I remember, there is a little poem by Stedman which contains the same thought. Let me read it to you, Master:" —

" Could we but know  
The land that ends our dark, uncertain travel,  
Where lie those happier hills and meadows low, —  
Ah, if beyond the spirit's inmost cavil  
Aught of that country could we surely know,  
Who would not go ?

" Might we but hear  
The hovering angel's high imagined chorus,  
Or catch, betimes, with wakeful eyes and clear,  
One radiant vista of the realm before us, —  
With one rapt moment given to see and hear,  
Ah, who would fear ?"

" The child of a king," continued the Master, " is sent to an obscure village that he may be educated. Discipline is necessary that he may rightly rule when he comes into his inheritance. That he may become perfectly developed, he must keep in mind two things: (First, that he is not a peasant, but a king's son. If this becomes a vivid fact, it will be a constant incentive. He must bear himself like a prince, and commit no act unworthy of his station; he will disdain whatever is sordid and mean, be frank, honest, generous and charitable. Then, second, he must not forget that his father occupies the throne, and that he will sometime be called to the enjoyment of his inheritance. That thought will lift him above his poor surroundings. When trouble comes, and hard-

ship and wretchedness, he will say to his soul, 'I must be patient. My father knew that these things would happen when he placed me here. I will tell him of my sufferings, and he will help me to bear them. By and by, he will send his messenger, and then I shall enter into power.'

"But he is told that he cannot get to the father's house, even when summoned, except by a very painful experience, and being weak and timid, he is appalled. As your Hamlet says, 'There's the rub.' His peasant's life presses upon him so heavily that he even doubts whether after all he is the son of a king whom he has never seen, whether this lower life of his is not the only reality, and the promised life in the palace a beautiful but deceptive dream. If his doubt goes far enough, he fears the change which will transport him to the new condition of things, clings with increasing tenacity to his drudgery, his thatched cottage, his hard fare and harder

bed; and in the end the prince's aspirations take flight and he is left a mere peasant, without pride of birth or hope for the future. He gravitates to lower things and becomes as poor in thought and ambition as he is poor in purse. His heart grows sluggish and selfish, and he ends a higher order of animal. Without faith in the future, this life is a dungeon. You must dethrone God before you deny immortality. If the one exists, the other follows as a matter of course."

"Master," I said, for I saw he was in such a mellow mood that he would lay bare his heart, "you have often promised to tell me the story of your father's last hours. I do not seek to intrude on such sacred privacy, but our conversation must remind you of that sad period, and the occasion seems to befit the recital."

"It was not a sad experience, my son," he replied, after a moment's hesitation. "Rather, one so hallowed by trusting confidence that after five and

twenty years it makes my heart glow with gratitude."

"Is it so long since he died?" I asked.

"Five and twenty years," he mused, as he gazed into the blazing fire, "and yet it seems but yesterday."

"His age, Master?"

"Just beyond fifty, in the vigor and prime of life. And yet no broken column represents his life. My son, there are no broken columns in God's providence. His work was done, and well done. Dear, white-haired man! — tender and true; a jewel without a flaw; a soul without a blemish."

The Master was slowly drawing aside the veil; and I did not venture to interrupt him with a question. The moon had dropped behind the hills, and deep darkness had fallen on the landscape. The only sound I heard was the deep bay of the faithful watch-dog, as he warned us that some stranger was passing by, or the sighing of the wind in the

branches of the pines near by; and yet no sense of loneliness marred that quiet evening hour.

"The janitor of the college," began the Master, "knocked at my door just after morning prayers one day, and placed in my hand a telegram. In those times, and with the people among whom I was born, the telegraph was seldom used except in great emergencies. My heart stood still, and my eyes filled with tears. It was only after a great effort that I forced myself to open the message. Then I discovered that my father had had a severe hemorrhage and was weak from loss of blood. There was nothing specially alarming in the information, for the dear man had suffered in a like manner on former occasions; but there was something between the lines which made me tremble. The words which one omits to write convey sometimes more information than those that are sent. I read my mother's mind when she penned that message, and knew

perfectly what she longed to say but refrained from saying for fear of its effect on me. I often wonder, my son, if there are not two telegraphs at work at the same time, — the one operated by an employee, and the other by mysterious agencies which we as yet know little about. Be that as it may, I really received two messages, — the first by wire, announcing my father's illness, and the other by impression, bidding me come home as quickly as possible."

I would have interrupted the Master's narrative at this point, for he had hinted at a very interesting subject, and one concerning which we have all had some strange and inexplicable experiences. Events do make themselves known by throwing the shadow of their coming through many miles of distance until it falls on the heart of the person who is most affected by them; the pages of history are full of incidents of this kind. But I gazed at the sparks in the old fire-



place as they flew upward, and said nothing.

"When I reached the house," continued the Master, "my father stood in the doorway to welcome me. He knew I would come on the wings of the wind; and in spite of his feebleness he had dressed, taken his seat by the window to watch, and then, when he saw me, came forward to greet me. At the first glimpse of his wan face I almost staggered. It was so pale, and in the eyes was such a far away look that I thought my heart would break. But I quickly overcame my emotions for his sake, took his hand, and kissed his cheek as I always did after a separation.

"‘I am glad to see thee, my boy,’ he said with an air of weariness; but I was too full to make reply, and he led the way into our little parlor. . . .

"‘You have been ill, Father?’ I said.

"‘Yes,’ was the reply, in soft, low tones; ‘more ill than ever before.’ It was clear that he was thinking profoundly, that he

had faced the emergency, and put aside all its terrors. His manner was calm, too calm, and his speech was so full of gentleness and affection that I felt already bereaved.

“ ‘ But, Father,’ I said with such cheerfulness as I could summon, ‘ a few days rest and — ’

“ Then he interrupted me, saying with a significance which pierced me to the soul: ‘ My boy, I am glad you came home.’

“ I knew what he meant; and he knew that I knew it. That was enough. The subject was never referred to again. We understood each other; and there was nothing to do but to get ready for an event whose coming could not be delayed.

“ Shortly afterward he retired to his chamber, and never rose again. Day and night I was with him for four weeks, only snatching, now and then, an hour or two of troubled sleep. The tide of life was on the ebb; every day found him a little weaker. But the mind re-

tained its wonted clearness, I had almost said vigor.

"When I took his poor, thin hand in mine and whispered, 'Father, how is it with you?' he always replied, —

"'A little nearer home, my son.'

"That was his attitude. The journey was drawing to a close, and with each passing hour he was 'a little nearer home.'

"There was a period of suffering, not of pain, but of great discomfort. It seemed an effort for the heart to continue its beating.

"'What day is it?' he asked.

"'Tuesday, Father,' I answered.

"Then he looked at me with those beautiful blue eyes and said, 'To-morrow will be Wednesday,' and fell into a doze.

"On Wednesday, at daybreak, he called for me. The sun threw its slanting rays through the window, and the cool, fresh breeze crept into the room. We were alone together. The tide was ebbing fast,

and ere many hours my watching would be over.

“ ‘My boy,’ he said, ‘at sunset we must part. When the stars come out to-night, I shall not be here.’

“That was more than I could bear. I hurried to the window, and fell into a paroxysm of tears. A terrible shudder went through my frame, and for the moment I was beside myself. I was nervously weakened by the long strain of anxiety, and could bear no more. When I returned to his side, I saw that his lips were trembling, and I reproached myself for my weakness. Who was I, that I should be considered at such a time as that?

“He stretched out his hand and laid it on mine. ‘My boy,’ he said, ‘God knows best. This parting is hard for you and for me; but we shall meet again.’

“ ‘Father,’ I asked, ‘have you no fears of death?’

“He slowly shook his head.

"The way is not dark, my father?"

"Again he shook his head. Then his eyes rested apparently on the ceiling; but I knew that he was looking into the Beyond, and the sweet smile on his lips told me that he saw what I could not see, and that the vision gave him comfort and strength.

"Tell me, dear father,' I cried with unsuppressed emotion,—‘tell me all that lies on your heart, all which it is permitted to me to know.’

"My boy,' he whispered, for with every passing moment he was growing weaker, 'in a little while I shall be free. This suffering will be over. I shall be myself again. I shall be like one who leaves the room softly, and closes the door behind him. Perhaps you will hear my footsteps on the other side; but through that closed door you cannot look. You will still be here, and I shall be there. (Death means no more than that.) My love for you will continue. If the Lord wills, I shall watch ✓

over you in the years to come. And when you grow gray, as I am now, and lie, as I lie, on the bed of death, you will see the same open door through which I shall pass, and you will close it behind you, as I must. But when you cross the threshold, I will be there, if possible, to meet and greet you.'

"The hand tightened on mine with something like a convulsive grasp. The change was close at hand. The breathing became irregular, and in a few minutes more he had attained the freedom he longed for, had crossed the threshold, had entered the new life. I was bruised and broken as the consciousness of my loss fell on me with its stunning force; but not for the wealth of the Indies would I part with the dear memory of those closing hours of my father's earthly life."

Then he said with more emphasis than he was accustomed to use, "That dying man's faith was well founded, or this universe is one vast blunder."

"But, Master," I suggested, "if this life were all, would not such an ending be still glorious?"

"No, a thousand times no," he answered. I saw he was deeply moved. "Life would be like the rocket which rises to midheaven, bursts into many colors, and then goes out in darkness. The deity who devised such a death would simply be an expert in legerdemain. To raise such hopes, to allow them to blossom to maturity, and then to disappoint them, would render it forever impossible to utter the Lord's Prayer. Love would be blotted out; and all relations between earth and heaven would abruptly end. With reverence I declare that such a deity would have no claim on our confidence. Death is a serious matter; and at such a time we ought to have no delusions. The materialist solves this grave problem in a way abhorrent to the world's sense of honor. Whatever difficulties may attend the acceptance of man's

immortality, they are as nothing in comparison with the difficulties which arise when you deny it."

I gave the logs a vigorous thrust, but stoutly maintained silence. The Master was in deadly earnest, and I feared I might somehow remind him of the lateness of the hour. I was hungry in soul; and he was throwing into my lap the food I most needed. It does one unspeakable good to listen to a vigorous and unrelenting defence of such doctrines. We waver in our faith so constantly that when one stands before us and tells us he believes with every fibre of his being, we are stirred as by martial music, our doubts and fears become ghostly and vanish.

"Your materialism," he went on, "is weak where it should be strongest. It is a thought without a heart. It robs you of all your valuables, and leaves you a hopeless wreck. You tell me you want the truth, and nothing but the truth. You think you have found it in negation; you



boast of its possession. That is well. By all means let us have the truth, though the heavens fall. But what better criterion of truth can be found than experiment? If infidelity will produce the highest manhood, it has a mighty argument in its favor.

“Put materialism and Christianity shoulder to shoulder, or, in the parlance of the schools, put the inexorable truth side by side with the delusions in which I believe. Plant your doctrines in one child’s soul; and let me plant mine in the soul of another child. Teach your child that this is the end; I will teach mine that this is the beginning. Tell yours that prayer is useless, that he must rely solely on himself. I will teach mine that the invisible Father is above him, that a holy Providence guards him, that morning and evening he may stretch out his hand, and God will take it and lead him over the rough and dangerous places.

“Watch the result. The lives of these

two dear ones will be essentially different. The qualities of their characters will be opposed to each other. To the one, the sense of heavenly helpfulness is a negative quantity; to the other, it is a strong staff on which to lean. And when death approaches, the one will regard him as an inexorable tyrant whose decrees are both merciless and heart-rending; while the other wraps the drapery of his couch about him, murmurs with trusting confidence, 'Thy will be done,' and falls into a sweet sleep.

"Your materialism is a misfit garment for the soul, — a garment of shreds and patches, neither protecting from the heat of summer nor the cold of winter. Or, to change the figure, it does not furnish food which either satisfies the appetite, or nourishes the aspirations. One may accustom himself to such food, but it requires a distinct effort; and at the very best, it produces moral and spiritual indigestion which induces chronic melancholy. With

unbelief, you simply endure life; with faith in God, you enjoy life. Nobody ever lived in doubt who would not at any time be glad to get rid of it. Nobody ever had a vital faith who did not feel that it was his most precious possession.

"Compare the results of these two theories of the universe and you stand face to face with a thrilling and startling fact. Admit that your materialism is true, and that my Christianity is false; still you are forced to concede that the one develops the noblest qualities of the human character, and that the other signally fails to do so. Under the one, the soul enlarges and becomes purified; under the other, it shrinks and becomes desperate. In other words, the world and the soul are so constituted that the alleged delusions of Christianity are worth infinitely more as an incentive to progress, to civilization, to orderly society, to philanthropy, and to that whole range of qualities which we call the virtues, than

is the truth as represented by scientific materialism.

“ And what kind of a universe is it, in which falsehood, an hallucination, can make a nobler manhood than the truth? ”

The Master rose as he uttered this last sentence, and quietly bade me good-night. But I sat before those blazing logs thinking and wondering until the clock struck two, and then wearily went to bed.

## CHAPTER VI.

### A MARBLE BABE.

REUBEN NIX'S little one was dead. I went with the Master to the more than humble home of the parents. Reuben was a day laborer with very uncertain work. Sometimes he had enough, and then a joint graced his table; at other times he had nothing, and then he lived I know not how. He was a rough, brusque, but good-hearted man to whom religion was a far away and foggy mystery.

We crawled up three dark flights of stairs in one of the lower districts, and then Mary Nix met us at the door. Her face was somewhat hard, for life had been a constant struggle; but at the sight of my friend, so self-contained, so thoroughly master of the situation, and yet so gentle

and sympathetic, she broke down and buried her face in her apron.

The Master led her into the half-furnished sitting-room where Reuben sat glum and despondent, conscious that something strange had happened to him, but not quite knowing what it meant. The child's body lay on the bed in the chamber adjoining; and the Master, without a word, entered and beckoned me to follow. The little one was like a bit of beautifully chiselled marble, and as cold; but there was a smile on her lips as though she had been welcomed to the heavenly play-ground, and was surprised and delighted with her angelic companions.

Then the hot and pent-up quarters in that lowly and in all respects disagreeable tenement, seemed to fade from my vision. The walls of the chamber melted into thin air, and I heard a voice saying, "Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." It was deep, mellow, and uplifting; it thrilled me

through and through, and my eyes filled with tears. I listened awe-struck, as the voice continued, "Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not." The voice of an angel could not have been more persuasive or more pleading. A third time that voice broke on my startled ear, "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you."

The effect was as impressive as the notes of an organ in some great cathedral. I could not help trembling from head to foot, for the Master's gentle assurance, the solemn majesty of his manner, dissipated all my doubts. My moral firmament, erstwhile filled with stars, began to feel the warm glow of the rising sun, and, for the time, heaven not only seemed a grand reality, but death a friendly presence to guide us through the valley of shadows.

I heard a muffled sob which came from the other room. Mary was weeping as

though her heart would break; and the lines about Reuben's mouth twitched nervously. It was plain that he made a great but vain effort to keep his sorrow under the lock and key of silence. The Master took his place by their side; while I, quite overcome by the scene, sat in a chair by the window.

We were so shut in by blank walls that I felt half-suffocated; and yet as I caught a glimpse of the sky and watched the clouds as they scudded by over the roofs of adjoining buildings, I lost all thought of my surroundings. What is poverty, I said to my soul, if one has heaven in view? What matters it that we have little now, — hard work and a crust of bread, — if it be true that when the day is over we shall be borne across the flood and enter the land where there is no night, and where there are no tears?

The Master was silent for a few minutes. Then he said, "Mary, are you sorry that the little one has gone?"



It seemed a strange question to ask; and the only answer was a wild torrent of weeping.

"The babe," said Reuben, sturdily, and almost defiantly, "was our only comfort and hope. I'm a hard working man, Dominie; and there are not many comforts in life for such as me. Many's the time, when I growled because I had to handle the pick and spade, I have thought of that baby in her crib, and of the good woman getting my dinner, and come to be satisfied with my lot. It was something to look forward to when we knocked off work, was the laugh of that little one which would welcome me home. I have had hard thoughts, Dominie, because the world has n't always treated me fairly; but the child has kept me from bearing a grudge. The chuckle of the babe has been better than good luck to me; but now she's dead, what can I do?"

"Reuben," answered the Master, so quietly and gently that I knew he was

dealing with some great verity, "tell me something. You are poor, you say?"

The strong man pointed to the broken furniture in that stuffy room, to the carpetless floor, to the half-open and empty cupboard.

"Dominie, if I had money would I live here?" he said. "Poor? — ay, and no prospect of anything else. If only I have enough to eat, and a shelter for my head, I am content."

"If some benevolent stranger, who had at his command everything that heart could wish," said the Master, "had come into this home and said to you: 'Reuben, you have a precious jewel in that child. Can you furnish her with all she needs, — clothing for her body, tender care and cunning skill if she falls sick, costly teachers who shall develop her mind and make a true woman of her when she grows up?' — what would your answer be?"

"Ah, Dominie," the strong man replied, "you hit me hard. My poverty

is not a crime; and I would do the best I could."

"And suppose this radiant stranger," continued the Master, "should say, 'Reuben, I want you to make a great sacrifice. It will cost you dear, I know, for you love the girl; but because you love her I ask you to make it. Give me the child for a little while. She shall never forget you, and she shall never cease to be your child and Mary's; and in God's good time you shall not only see her again, but live with her. Give her to me, or rather lend her to me, and I will find for her such teachers as you cannot afford. I will see that she is guarded from all temptations, and that, when she reaches her youth, she shall fill your father heart with pride.' What answer would you make, Reuben Nix?"

The poor man stared at the Master, who sat still and unmoved. Hot blood mounted to his cheeks. He drew an old red handkerchief across his eyes, and moved rest-

lessly from side to side; he was utterly dazed, bewildered. A conflict was going on within which shook his frame as an earthquake shakes the ground. As he gazed on the picture which the Master's hand had painted, he became wild to the point of desperation; but a reply seemed to be beyond his reach.

Then the Master spoke again, "What would you say, Reuben? Is your love for the child large enough to give her up? When you came home at night, and heard her baby laugh, was there selfishness in your joy, and did you prize her because she contributed to your happiness alone, or because God had bestowed upon you a priceless gift to be protected by your strong arm, and to be cherished by your warm heart? Could you give her to the stranger's keeping that she might receive what you could not give her?"

"Ay, Dominie; I think I would have put her into the stranger's arms," replied Reuben, after a little, "and said, 'Take

her, but let me feel sure that she is safe. Take her, and let her have what her father can't buy; but don't let her grow away from me and her mother. That is all I ask.' "

"Reuben," said the Master, "the Stranger has been here."

"No, Dominie; no man has crossed this threshold."

"Yes, He came; but you did not see Him, Reuben. He thought it better not to ask your consent to the parting; but He took the child, and she is safe in His keeping."

"Dominie," cried Reuben, "who was He?"

"It was the Christ," replied the Master, solemnly, "He has taken the babe to heaven. It was a wise thing to do, or it would not have been done. It is well with the child; for she lives in a mansion not made with hands, and He who came in the watches of the night and bore her away, asks you to have such

faith that you can say, 'Thy will, not mine, be done.'

As the Master and I sat before the blazing fire that night he said, "The soul is the elusive reality of the universe."

"Master," I said, "it seems hard to be snatched from the very threshold of life."

"In God's providence," he replied, "nothing is taken before its time."

"And did that child," I asked, "achieve its whole mission in this world within its thirteen months of sunshine?"

"If you will tell me what its mission was," he answered, "I can make reply. Do you know? Does any man know? If the child was not given to the parents, but only loaned to their love; and the object was to draw their hearts away from the things of this life to the things of the other life,—then I should judge from what I saw this afternoon that the little one's career was a complete and perfectly rounded one. One cannot believe in God

without believing that He makes no mistakes. You may have seventy years allotted to you; another may have only as many days. The amount of time spent here has nothing to do with the problem. An oak lives for a couple of centuries; but the rose-bush does all that is required of it in a single season. The lion may roam the forests for many winters and summers; but the microscopic atom in a drop of water does its entire work and dies in a single afternoon. It is not length of days, but perfect work, that renders life valuable."

"But is there not something peculiarly disappointing," I asked, "in the death of a child?"

"Death," he answered, "never comes without bringing disappointment. Hopes always wither after his visit. He is never gladly welcomed; it would be impossible to receive him with rejoicing, —(God does not require it.) But we can receive him with resignation; that is our duty. There

is, however, something beautiful in the death of a babe. Its little soul has never been marred by a thought of sin; it is fresh from the hands of creative power; it has nothing to unlearn, nothing to regret, nothing that calls for repentance. From the bosom of the Father in heaven to the bosom of the mother on earth, and thence, with loving kisses on its lips, back to the Father's bosom again.

"I have no doubt that the discipline of this life is very necessary; but if there are instances in which it is not necessary, those souls are to be congratulated.

"One of the most painful anxieties of parents is lest their children, either as children, or men and women, may be entangled in the web of temptation and fall a prey to moral ruin. If you could satisfy a father that his son would never stoop to dishonor, would always wear his reputation as a precious jewel, you would increase the happiness of home by one half.



“The most painful incident in life is when a child who has been reared with prayerful affection breaks away from the protecting influences of home, leaps into the sea of passion and pleasure, resists all efforts to save him, and goes down with a crime on his soul. Earth has many tragedies, but few as pitiful as that.

“It is hard to say good-by to a little one before the words of welcome have left our lips; but if, from some high vantage-ground, we could view the future and see that some accident or disease might fatally injure his body or his mind, we should regard death as a friend rather than an enemy. This privilege is not granted us; but we can soothe our sorrow with a firm faith that the Almighty’s plan is both wide and long, and that He seeks the good of all His people by every decree of His providence.

“The bereaved pay an unconscious tribute to the wisdom and goodness of God. When a little one lies on its bier,

the parents are well-nigh broken-hearted; sometimes they are driven to the very verge of despair. They may even rebel, and, with a certain defiance of attitude, arraign the love of God; but were the prerogative granted them of calling back that child, they would hesitate long before exercising it. The feeling prevails everywhere, at such a time, that though the purpose of the sorrow is hidden, it has a purpose. They cannot see that what is best has happened; but in their heart of hearts they feel that it must be so. They would not take the responsibility — such is their unselfish love for the one who has gone — of recalling him from heaven to earth.

“Children are the uplifting influence of every home.”

By this time there were only embers in the fireplace, and even they were going to sleep; so the Master and I parted.

## CHAPTER VII.

### A FLY IN THE BELFRY.

**I**T was one of the coldest nights of one of the coldest winters we had had for many a year. The sky was without a cloud; and the stars shone with a crisp and dazzling brilliancy. It seemed a gala occasion in the regions above; and the heavenly lanes and highways were crowded by a multitude of worlds which vied with each other in gorgeous apparel.

Moreover the great Beyond seemed to have dropped down into the neighborhood of the earth, very much as a mother bends over the cradle of her child when she sings the evening lullaby. There are times when the heavens appear to be far away, — so far that we forget that they and we belong to the same family. We

seem to have been put aside into some corner of the universe, while the grand procession moves in imperial splendor at such a distance that we have no part or lot in it. At other times they come close to us, and we feel that it would only be a short step from us to them. On this particular night they were within ear-shot of the Master and me, as we sat by that blazing fire and talked of the soul's other Home. The wind shook our windows, and piled huge snow-drifts in front of the door; but the hickory logs in the big fireplace chirped as merrily as ever, and defied the cold to invade the room.

"The great questions, Master," I said, "upon which everything depends are, What is heaven; and, Where is it?"

"No; I think not," he replied. "What, and where heaven is, is a matter of slight importance. We can well afford to leave such things to the imagination. Once assure us that there is a heaven, and that we shall enter into the glories thereof at

death, and we can rest satisfied without demanding geographical or social details."

"But have you no curiosity, Master?"  
I persisted.

"I can hardly say that I have, my son. Sometimes I dream about its employments and pleasures; and once in a while I have indulged in speculation concerning its battlements and gates and streets and temples, and the throng of redeemed beings who cry, 'Holy!' But as a general thing my mind is entirely passive and quiescent. I am not quite sure that I wish to know what heaven is like, or what I shall do when I get there. I confess that it is such a privilege to feel that I shall sometime cross its golden threshold, that my gratitude and joy fill me full, and there is no desire to have it minutely described as the traveller describes Italy or Persia or India; I rather prefer to have all these things left as a surprise."

"That seems an odd view to take," I

said. "I think few would agree with you, Master."

"If asking questions meant the receipt of an answer," he replied, "I might appreciate your state of mind. But of what use is it to ask a question when God has hidden the answer where no man can find it? And since it is impossible to have your curiosity satisfied, why irritate yourself to no purpose? You have been told all that is necessary for you to know,—a great deal. The promise has been given that we shall live again. A few sentences have fallen on your ears which show plainly enough that the conditions of the Hereafter are beyond your conception. Two facts have been vouchsafed,—you will be transported at death to another home, where there shall be neither night nor tears; and you will there dwell amid surroundings such as no eye hath seen. Are not these facts enough for the present?

— "Along the streets of the Celestial City

the rumbling wheels of the hearse shall never be heard. The many mansions on either side of its great thoroughfares are sunlit homes in which tears and sorrow are unknown. The struggle for food and raiment will be over; the strifes and contentions which are our dismay and our despair in this life will be buried in the grave of time. It is such a place that our present ideal of happiness will seem commonplace and unworthy; for anxiety, sickness, pain, and weariness will be done away."

"And all that, Master, stimulates my imagination. Knowing so much, it seems a great grievance that I should not know more."

"But these facts lie as it were in the suburbs of heaven," he continued. "I have already hurled you into the midst of the inconceivable; and your flight is aimless and without result. If more were told, you could not understand it. Heaven would not be heaven if it could be described in terms of human experience.

It is heaven because it is beyond the reach of thought. When I say, 'There shall be no night there,' can your utmost effort grasp such a condition of things? When I add, 'There shall be no tears there,' have you the dimmest apprehension of what the words mean? Human language has no terms in which to convey the truth about it; and human thought has no appliance by which it can be comprehended. We have certain hints, but nothing more.

"There is an old rabbinical legend, and it runs thus: When Joseph was prime minister to Pharaoh, during the period of the famine, he emptied the chaff of his granaries into the Nile. It floated far away on the moving current; and the people on the bank at a distance saw it. It was only chaff; but it meant that there was corn in plenty somewhere. Chaff always means corn; and yet the chaff is worthless. You could not persuade those people that they were mistaken. They



were suffering the pangs of hunger, and supposed that the famine extended throughout the country, and that everybody was as hungry as themselves. But that floating chaff was a revelation. They were sure that if their strength would enable them to reach the point at which it had been thrown into the river, they would find plenty for themselves and their famishing families.

"The parallelism is faulty in many respects; but, imperfect as it is, it serves my purpose."

"You mean," I said somewhat hastily, for I saw the drift of his argument, "that the thought of heaven implies the existence of heaven."

"Somewhat more even than that, my son," he replied; "the existence of heaven is a fact conceded. What it is, and what will be our occupation there,—we get a glimpse of these things in strange ways. Adown the stream of time come floating to our heart's doors certain dreams of

bliss, — reunion with those we have loved and lost; the longing for rest; the instinctive assurance that when we are freed from the handicap of flesh and disease we can develop dormant faculties and satisfy ungratified desires for holiness. The race as a race has enjoyed these hopes since it first began to struggle. They are the chaff; but the corn which is higher up the stream, in the granaries of God, will be ours in the by-and-by.”

“But is it not strange, Master, that we are not endowed with a sixth sense by means of which we might get some glimmer of these grand realities?”

“In Europe once,” he answered, “I went into the bell-tower of a famous cathedral; and on the rim of one of the huge bells I saw a fly. Suppose that little insect to be gifted with reasoning powers as wide as the fullest range of its possibilities. He might hear the awful din of the chimes, but could he discover that each sound was a musical note, that

it was related to other notes, and that the whole was a hymn of gladness?

“If the plan of the building, the purpose for which it was used, were to be explained to him by the words contained in his fly vocabulary, — and these would be the only means of communication, — could he be made to understand them? Would it be possible to convey to him any adequate idea of the architect; of the foundations on which the structure rests; of the many colored windows, each symbolical of some historic event; of the huge organ, which makes the air throb until the heart is melted into reverence; of the robed priest at the altar, and of the hopes, the warnings, the consolations, which his office represents? Though he did his best to comprehend, your language would be as mysterious as a problem of Calculus to a newly born child. Any attempt to make him understand these things in their right relations would be utterly out of the question.

“If he were to investigate matters without the aid of a teacher, or co-explorer, and should take his flight from belfry to dome, from dome to nave, from nave to apse, from organ to altar, and should then deduce a theory from the facts thus attained, would it not be necessarily full of errors? Would he be mentally capable of doing justice to the subject? However honest he might be in the endeavor to get at the exact truth, and however persevering, it would still remain true that no fly, though gifted with extraordinary genius, could under any circumstances acquire a realizing sense of the grandeur or the significance of the edifice he was exploring. His philosophy would, after all, be only a fly’s philosophy. He would grope helplessly through the vast problem, make a thousand mistakes, and inevitably reach at last a wholly inadequate conclusion.

“Now, suppose further, that some superior being should be specially commis-

sioned to explain the uses of the edifice to the little insect. He would of course be compelled to use terms which expressed something within the fly's experience; otherwise it would be a mere description of a rainbow's coloring to a blind man who cannot conceive of red and violet and orange. What would happen? The fly might listen; he might have every confidence in his teacher, — but he would be nevertheless intellectually confused. The best that could be done would be to appeal to his imagination; but even that is limited, and the pictures would be nothing better than a radiance far beyond his reach.

“We are but superior flies in this God-made cathedral of the universe. With our unaided strength we have won proud victories. We have wrenched from many of the stars their secrets; have dived into the bowels of the earth and brought up many a strange story; have roamed hither and yon, and collected such glorious facts

from which to construct a theory of creation that we are amazed at our own success. But far beyond us, out of reach of our mightiest endeavor, the greatest mystery of all hides itself from our near-sightedness. We comprehend much, and that excites our curiosity to discover more; but creative force is still, and always will remain, the despair of science.

“We have longings; and we search until we find the wherewithal to satisfy them. We grow hungry; and behold, the food is at hand. We love; and soon discover some one who accepts our affection. We have ambitions; and the means of gratifying them are not at too great a distance. (We therefore reach the conclusion that all natural aspirations imply the existence of something which will meet their demands. We long intensely and painfully for a continuance of life after what seems to us the end of all things has come. That longing is a component part of our nature.—The barbarian has it; he

buries his friend, and then kills that friend's dogs and horses, and lays his bow and arrows in his grave in the full belief that he will have use for them in the happy hunting-grounds of the future. ( Shall all else be granted us, and this chiefest of our hopes be denied?

“And yet when one attempts to get a clear idea of that future life, he fails, precisely as the fly fails to get an idea of the cathedral.) And no language can describe it because its conditions are as different as those into which the butterfly enters after the grub dies and the new creature breaks through the chrysalis.”

“Master,” I cried with some degree of vehemence, “is the other life indeed so glorious that it is practically unthinkable? Do you mean that?”

“Therein lies the goodness of God,” he answered. “If our future home were a palace of marble in place of the thatched cottage of this present life; and if our happiness were to consist of rich viands,

the unalloyed gratification of our physical passions, sweet revenge against our enemies, and such things as are either within our daily experience or observation, — then we should readily understand the life after the resurrection. But God's goodness and wisdom have with boundless prodigality prepared something infinitely higher and infinitely better; and because it is higher and better, so much so that we cannot possibly understand it, we halt and hesitate and even indulge in doubts."

I was silent, for the Master was wrestling with mighty thoughts. There was one question, however, which still weighed on my heart. The clock struck midnight; but one word more I must have, or sleep would never come to me again.

"Tell me," I said at length, — "tell me, Master, shall we know our loved ones on the other side?"

"You should be able to answer that question yourself, my son," he replied. "Indeed, if what I have said is true, it



answers itself. Shall we know less in the Hereafter than we do now? What is the significance of immortality, if it means forgetfulness? Of what use is immortality, if we lose our identity? How can this life be a preparation for the next, if death obliterates all memory of it? You send your boy to a primary school, where he gets the rudiments of an education. At the proper time he is removed, and sent to better equipped teachers, that he may struggle with larger problems. Suppose your act of removal from the primary department had some magic in it by which all knowledge already obtained was torn from his mind and thrown away, — would the boy ever be educated? Would not the fundamental principles of education be destroyed?

“My father told me on his death-bed, when he laid his hand on my head in farewell, that he would meet me on the other shore. He will do it, if it is possible; and immortality means nothing unless it is

possible. It is one of the joys to which I look forward; and I am sure I shall not be disappointed."

He left me; but my heart repeated again and again these words from the German:

"O Land! O Land!  
To all the broken-hearted,  
The mildest herald by our faith allotted  
Beckons, and with inverted torch doth stand  
To lead us with a gentle hand  
Into the land of the Departed,  
Into the Silent Land."

THE END.









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